

All these choices make this one of the most important elections in our history. The security and prosperity of our country, the health and the education of families, the retirement of our seniors, the direction of our culture are all at stake. And the decision is in the best of hands; it's in the hands of the American people.

I see a good day for America. I clearly see a better tomorrow for all of us. One of my favorite quotes was written by a Texan from right down the road in El Paso, Texas. He said, "Sarah and I live on the east side of the mountain. It's the sunrise side, not the sunset side. It's the side to see the day that is coming, not to see the day that is gone." You know, when you really listen to the words in this campaign, my opponent has spent much of this campaign talking about the day that is gone. I'm talking about the day that is coming.

We've been through a lot together over the last 3¾ years. Because we've done the hard work of climbing the mountain, we see the valley below. We'll protect our fam-

ilies. We'll build on our prosperity. We'll defend our deepest values. We will spread freedom and liberty around the world, and that will help us keep the peace we all want.

You know, when I campaigned in New Mexico 4 years ago asking for the vote, I said that if you gave me the honor to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. at Alamogordo High School. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the 2004 Republican National Convention; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

Statement on the Death of James Cardinal Hickey October 24, 2004

Cardinal James Hickey was an inspirational spiritual leader who brought comfort to the sick and help and hope to those in need. He was a caring and compassionate man. For 20 years, he led the Archdiocese of Washington with great dignity

and conviction. He will be deeply missed by his church, the Washington community, and all of the people throughout America whose lives he touched so deeply. Laura and I send our prayers and condolences to his family, friends, and loved ones.

Remarks in Greeley, Colorado October 25, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming today. Laura and I are so honored so many came out to say hello. You have lifted our spirits. Thank you for being here. It's great to be here in Greeley, Colorado.

You know, I am told the last sitting President to visit Greeley was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who came right before he won his second term. With your help, history will be repeated.

And that's what we are here to do; we're here to ask for your help. We'd like you to get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls. Remind them we have a duty in our democracy to vote. When you get them headed to the polls, tell them if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

So Laura and I were in the seventh grade together in west Texas. And then we became reacquainted when she—she was a public school librarian at the time. I asked her to marry me. She said, "Fine, but make me one promise." I said, "What is that?" She said, "Promise me I'll never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you've got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She's given a lot of speeches, and when she does, the American people see a strong, compassionate, great First Lady.

I am proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. Look, I readily concede that he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] But you'll be pleased to know I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. I picked him because of his judgment, his experience. He's getting the job done for the American people.

You know, Laura, and I were able to welcome the Giulianis to our ranch in Crawford, Texas, last night. We know him more—I know him better than I knew him as mayor. I know him as a person, a compassionate, strong leader. I am proud to have Rudy and Judith Giuliani traveling with us. I'm proud to have your support, Mr. Mayor. And I appreciate your great service to our country.

And like the mayor, I recognize that you've got a great Governor in Governor Bill Owens, I want to thank his wife, Frances, and daughter, Monica, and son, Brett, for being with us today.

I want to thank Senator Wayne Allard for his great service to the State of Colorado, and his wife, Joan, is with us today. I'm proud to stand with the next Senator

from Colorado, Pete Coors. I appreciate Marilyn being here. And when he wins, he'll be taking the place of a fine man in Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell. And I know you're proud of the Congresswoman from this district, Marilyn Musgrave. We're proud you're here, Marilyn. I appreciate Steve being here.

I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor. I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I appreciate Congressman Bob Schaffer for being here. Congressman, I appreciate working together to make sure this party stays united coming down the stretch.

I want to thank Mark Wills, the country and western singer who is here. He likes to sing in a part of the world where the cowboy hats outnumber the ties. I want to thank Kenny Cordova & The Olde Rock Band. I'm proud to be up here with a man who can hit that baseball in Todd Helton. We got to know him a little while back; we had he and his wife to the White House for dinner. And he can sure play. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank those who wear the uniform who are with us here today. Thank you for your service. I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example. I want to thank the military families who are here today for your sacrifice.

But most of all, I want to thank the rest of you for coming. I appreciate what you have done on behalf of our campaign and what you're going to do. Keep putting up the signs, making the phone calls, turning out the vote, and we're going to win a great victory on November the 2d.

We're coming down the stretch in the last week of this campaign. I will continue to talk about my vision for a more hopeful America. I am committed to low taxes, spending discipline. I'm committed to a sound energy policy that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

In a new term, we'll continue to work to make sure our farmers and ranchers can

make a decent living. In a new term, we'll continue to work to make sure the entrepreneurial spirit in America is strong so small businesses can thrive and succeed. In a new term, we'll stay on the path of reform and results in our schools so no child is left behind in America. In a new term, we'll make sure health care is more affordable and accessible for all our families and small businesses. In a new term, we'll keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors and strengthen the system for our children and our grandchildren. We will protect marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And I'll name judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

And all the progress we hope to make depends on the security of our Nation. We face enemies who hate our country and would do anything to harm us. I'll fight these enemies with every asset of our national power, and we will do our duty and protect the American people.

In the last 4 years, we've been through a lot of history. We saw a ruthless, sneak attack on the United States. We learned of heroism on doomed airplanes. We saw the bravery of rescuers running toward danger. We've seen our military bring freedom to the oppressed and justice to our enemies. Our Nation has shown our character to the world. We are proud to be Americans.

Now we are nearing the first Presidential election since September the 11th, 2001. The people of the United States will choose the leader of the free world in the middle of a global war. The choice is not only between two candidates; it is between two directions in the conduct of the war on terror. Will America return to the defensive, reactive mindset that sought to manage the dangers to our country?

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Or will we fight a real war with the goal of victory?

In every critical aspect, in every critical respect, my opponent and I see the war on terror differently, and the Americans need to consider these differences as they make a vital choice. First, I believe that America wins wars by fighting on the offensive. When I saw those images of the fire and death on September the 11th, I made a decision: Our country will not sit back and wait for future attacks; we will prevent those attacks by going after the enemy.

We are waging a global campaign from the mountains of central Asia to the deserts of the Middle East, from the Horn of Africa to the Philippines. And those efforts are succeeding. Since September the 11th, 2001, more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice, and the rest of them know we're on their trail.

After September the 11th, we set a new direction for American policy and enforced a doctrine that is clear to all: "If you supported or harbored terrorists, you are equally guilty of terrorist murder." We destroyed the terror camps that trained thousands of killers in Afghanistan. We removed the Taliban from power. We have persuaded Governments in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to recognize the enemy and to join the fight. We ended the regime of Saddam Hussein, which sponsored terror. America and the world are safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell. We sent a clear message to Libya, which has now given up its weapons of mass destruction programs. We have acted through diplomacy and force to shrink the area where the terrorists can freely operate. And that strategy has the terrorists on the run.

My opponent has a different view.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He says that fighting terrorists in the Middle East, America has, quote, "created terrorists where they did not exist," end quote.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. This is his argument, that terrorists are somehow less dangerous or

fewer in number if America avoids provoking them.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. But this represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the enemy. We are dealing with killers who have made the death of Americans the calling of their lives. If America were not fighting these killers west of Baghdad and in the mountains of Afghanistan and elsewhere, what does Senator Kerry think they would do? Would they be living productive lives of service and charity? [Laughter] Would the terrorists who behead innocent people on camera just be quiet, peaceful citizens if we had not liberated Iraq?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. We are fighting these terrorists with our military in Afghanistan and Iraq and beyond so we do not have to face them in the streets of our own cities.

America is not to blame for terrorist hatred, and no retreat by America would appease them. We don't create terrorists by fighting them. We defeat the terrorists by fighting them.

Our second big difference concerns Iraq. Victory in Iraq is essential to victory in the war on terror. We have a strategy to achieve that victory. The stakes in that country are high. If a terror regime were allowed to reemerge in Iraq, terrorists would again find a home, a source of funding, and vital support; they would correctly conclude that free nations do not have the will to defend themselves.

As Iraq succeeds as a free society in the heart of the Middle East, an ally in the war on terror, and a model of hopeful reform in a troubled region, the terrorists will suffer a crushing defeat, and every free nation will be more secure.

We are still confronting serious violence from determined enemies. Yet, the Iraqi Interim Government, with American and coalition support, is making progress week by week. Along with Iraqi forces, we're on the offensive in Fallujah, north Babil. We've restored Government control in

Samarra, Tall 'Afar, and Najaf. More than 100,000 Iraqi soldiers, police, and border guards are already trained, equipped, and bravely serving their country. More than 200,000 will be in place by the end of next year. An Iraqi independent electoral commission is up and running. Political parties are planning campaigns. A free and fair Iraq elections will be held on schedule this January.

The desperate executions of unarmed Iraqi security forces show the evil nature of the terrorists we fight. It proves these terrorists are enemies of the Iraqi people and the American people and everyone who loves freedom. The terrorist insurgents hate our progress, and they fight our progress, but they will not stop our progress. We will stay on the offense against these terrorists, and we will prevail. We will help the Iraqis get on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

My opponent has a different view.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. The Senator calls America's missions in Iraq a "mistake," a "diversion," a "colossal error."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And then he says he's the right man to win the war?

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You cannot win a war you do not believe in fighting.

On Iraq, my opponent has a strategy of pessimism and retreat.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's talked about artificial timetables to pull our troops out. He has sent the signal that America's overriding goal in Iraq would be to leave, even if the job is not done.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That sends the wrong message. It sends the wrong message to Iraqis who need to know that America will not cut and run. That sends the wrong message to the troops of our coalition who

need to know that we will honor their sacrifice by completing the mission. My opponent has the wrong strategy for the wrong country at the wrong time.

On this vital front of the war on terror, protest is not a policy, retreat is not a strategy, and failure is not an option. As long as I'm the Commander in Chief, America will never retreat in the face of the terrorists.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Third, American leadership is indispensable to winning the war on terror. Ever since September the 11th, 2001, America has sounded a certain trumpet. We've stated clearly the challenge to civilization. We've rallied many nations to oppose it. More than 90 nations are actively engaged in the war on terror. All 26 nations of NATO have personnel in either Iraq, Afghanistan, or both. NATO has taken leadership of an international force in Afghanistan, the first out-of-area deployment in the history of our Alliance. Japan has deployed forces in Iraq, the first overseas mission in the history of their democracy. Forces from South Korea are there. America has led. Many have joined. And America and the world are safer.

My opponent takes a different approach.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He believes that instead of leading with confidence, America must submit to what he calls a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not making that up. [Laughter] I was standing right here when he said it. As far as I can tell, that means our country must get permission from foreign capitals before we act in our own defense.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. As President, I will always work with other countries. I will seek their advice. But there is a world of difference between working with good allies and giving a few reluctant nations veto power over our national security. I will never, never

submit our national security decisions to veto of a foreign government.

In addition to a "global test," my opponent promises what he calls a "golden age" of diplomacy, to charm critical governments all over the world.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I don't see much diplomatic skill in Senator Kerry's habit of insulting America's closest friends. He's called the countries serving alongside us in Iraq, quote, "a trumped up coalition of the bribed, the coerced, the bought, and the extorted."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Even last week, my opponent said that we have, quote, "hardly anyone with us in Iraq." That is a deeply offensive way to treat some 30 nations that are in Iraq, and especially the 14 nations that have lost forces in our cause. How can Senator Kerry denigrate the contributions led by the likes of Tony Blair of Great Britain, John Howard of Australia, Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland, and then expect other leaders to stand with America in the future? You cannot expand an alliance by showing contempt for those already in it. In this time of challenge to civilization, America has found strong and responsible allies, and they deserve the respect of all Americans, not the scorn of a politician.

Fourth, I believe that America will gain long-term security by promoting freedom and hope and democracy in the broader Middle East. Our country needs to look ahead. And 20 years from now, if the Middle East is dominated by dictators and mullahs who build weapons of mass destruction and harbor terrorists, our children and grandchildren will live in a nightmare world of danger. That doesn't have to happen.

By taking the side of reformers and democrats in the Middle East, we'll gain allies in the war on terror and isolate the ideology of murder and help defeat the despair and hopelessness that feeds terror. By

spreading freedom, by spreading liberty, the world will become a much safer place for future generations. Progress in the broader Middle East toward freedom will not come easily. Yet, that progress is coming faster than many would have said possible. Across a troubled region, we're seeing a movement toward elections, greater rights for women, and open discussion of peaceful reform. The election in Afghanistan this month and the election in Iraq next January will be counted as landmark events in the history of liberty.

My opponent looks at things differently.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's not only skeptical of democracy in Iraq; he has not made democracy a priority for his foreign policy. But what is his long-term answer to the threat of terror? Is he content to watch and wait as anger and resentment grow for more decades? Is he content to wait as more and more people are angry and hostile and turn to terrorism? Is he content to wait until radicals without conscience gain the weapons to kill without limit? Ignoring the root causes of terror, turning a blind eye to the oppression and despair of millions may be easier in the short run, but we learned on September the 11th, if violence and fanaticism are not opposed at their source, they will find us where we live.

Instead of offering his own agenda for freedom, my opponent complains that we are trying to, quote, "impose democracy on the people of the broader Middle East." Is that what he sees in Afghanistan, unwilling people having democracy forced upon them? We did remove the Taliban by force, but democracy is rising in that country because the Afghan people, like people everywhere, want to live in freedom. No one forced them to register by the millions or to stand in long lines waiting to vote. For many people, that historic election was a day they will never forget. One man in western Kabul arrived to vote at 7 a.m. He said, "I don't want"—he said, "I didn't

sleep all night. I wanted to be the first in my polling station." My fellow citizens, freedom is on the march, and it is changing the world.

We are witnessing big and hopeful events. Yet, my opponent refuses to see them. I believe that people across the Middle East are weary of poverty and oppression. I believe everybody wants to be free. Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Our fifth great difference concerns the role of the Presidency. A President has to lead with consistency and strength. In a war, sometimes your tactics will change, but not your principles. Americans have seen how I do my job. Even when you might not agree with me, you know what I believe, where I stand, and what I intend to do. On good days and on bad days, whether the polls are up or down, I am determined to win the war on terror, and I will always support the men and women who do the fighting.

My opponent has taken a different approach.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. It's fair to say that consistency has not been his strong point. [*Laughter*] Senator Kerry says that we are better off with Saddam Hussein out of power, except when he declares that removing Saddam made us less safe.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Senator Kerry stated in our second debate that he always believed that Saddam Hussein was a threat, except a few questions later, when he said Saddam Hussein was not a threat. [*Laughter*] He says he was right when he voted to authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein, but that I was wrong to use force against Saddam Hussein. [*Laughter*] Now my opponent is throwing out the wild claim that he knows where bin Laden was in the fall of 2001—[*laughter*—and that our military had a chance to get him in Tora

Bora. This is an unjustified and harsh criticism of our military commanders in the field. This is the worst kind of Monday morning quarterbacking, and it is what we've come to expect from Senator Kerry.

In fact, our Commander in Afghanistan, General Tommy Franks recently wrote, quote, "The Senator's understanding of events do not square with reality." He was talking about Tora Bora. The General says that American Special Forces were actively involved in the search of terrorists in Tora Bora and that intelligence reports at the time placed bin Laden in any of several countries.

Before Senator Kerry got into political difficulty and revised his views, he saw Tora Bora differently. In the fall of 2001, on national TV, Senator Kerry said, quote, "I think we have been doing this pretty effectively, and we should continue to do it that way." At the time, Senator Kerry said about Tora Bora, "I think we've been smart. I think administration leadership has done well, and we are on the right track," end quote. All I can say is that I am George W. Bush, and I approve of that message.

Yet, Senator Kerry's record on national security has a far deeper problem than election-year flip-flopping. On the largest national security issues of our time, he has been consistently and dangerously wrong. When Ronald Reagan was confronting the Soviet Union at the height of the cold war, Senator Kerry said that President Reagan's policy of peace through strength was making America less safe.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And he voted against many of the weapons systems critical to our defense buildup. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong, and President Reagan was right.

When former President Bush led a coalition against Saddam Hussein in 1991, Senator Kerry voted against the use of force to liberate Kuwait.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. If his view had prevailed, Saddam Hussein today would dominate the Middle East and possess the world's most dangerous weapons. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong, and former President Bush was right.

In 1994, just one year after the first bombing of the World Trade Center, Senator Kerry proposed massive cuts in America's intelligence budget—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. —so massive that even his Massachusetts colleague, Ted Kennedy, opposed them. [Laughter] History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong and—we've got to be fair—[laughter]—Senator Kennedy was right.

Just last year, American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan needed \$87 billion for body armor, hazard pay, vehicles, weapons, and bullets. First, Senator Kerry said, "It would irresponsible to vote against the troops." Then he voted against the troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Then he said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." [Laughter] History has shown that Senator Kerry was right, then wrong—[laughter]—then briefly right—[laughter]—then wrong again. [Laughter]

Since then, the Senator has said the whole matter about the \$87 billion is a complicated matter. There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

During the last 20 years, in key moments of challenge and decision for America, Senator Kerry has chosen the position of weakness and inaction. With that record, he stands in opposition not just to me but to the great tradition of the Democratic Party. The party of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy is rightly remembered for confidence and resolve in times of war and in hours of crisis. Senator Kerry has turned his back on "pay any price" and "bear any burden." And he has replaced those commitments with "wait and see" and "cut and run."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Many Democrats in this country do not recognize their party anymore. Today I want to speak to every one of them: If you believe that America should lead with strength and purpose and confidence in our ideals, I would be honored to have your support, and I ask for your vote.

All the differences I outlined today add up to one big difference: Senator Kerry says that September the 11th did not change him much at all.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And his policies make that clear. He says the war on terror is primarily a law enforcement and intelligence gathering operation. His top foreign policy adviser says, "The war is just a metaphor, like the war on poverty." The Senator's goal is to go back to the mindset of the 1990s, when terrorism was seen as a nuisance, and we fought with subpoenas and a few cruise missiles.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There is a major problem with that. The era of calm he longs for was only a shallow illusion of peace. We know that throughout the 1990s, the terrorists were training and plotting against us. They saw our complacency as weakness. And so their plans became more ambitious and their attacks more deadly, until, finally, the Twin Towers became Ground Zero and the Pentagon was in flames. My outlook was changed on September the 11th.

A few days after the attacks, I stood with Rudy where the buildings fell. He'll never forget that day, and neither will I. I'll never

forget the evil of the enemy and the suffering of our people. I know we're not fighting a metaphor. And I remember the hard—workers in hardhats there yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." A fellow grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." From that day forward, I have gotten up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

In a new term, we will finish the work we have started. We will stand against terror. We will stand for freedom and peace. And on November 2d, my fellow Americans, I ask you stand with me.

God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m. at the Island Grove Regional Park Community Events Center. In his remarks, he referred to former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City, and his wife, Judith; Gov. Bill Owens and Lt. Gov. Jane Bergman Norton of Colorado; Marilyn Coors, wife of Colorado senatorial candidate Pete Coors; Steven E. Musgrave, husband of Representative Marilyn N. Musgrave; former Representative Bob Schaffer, senatorial candidate in Colorado; professional baseball player Todd Helton and his wife, Christy; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister John Howard of Australia; Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA (Ret.), former combatant commander, U.S. Central Command.

Remarks in Council Bluffs, Iowa October 25, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here. Laura and I are so

honored so many came out to say hello. You're lifting our spirits.